



Press Release



**Congressman John Conyers, Jr.
Michigan, 14th District**

**Ranking Member, U.S. House
Judiciary Committee
Dean, Congressional Black Caucus**
www.house.gov/judiciary_democrats/index.html

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**CONYERS HONORS ROSA PARKS
FOR STANDING UP TO INJUSTICE 50 YEARS AGO**

Congressman John Conyers, Jr., Ranking Member of the House Judiciary Committee, issued the following statement upon introduction of a resolution commemorating the 50th anniversary of Rosa Park's refusal to give up her seat on the bus:

"On December 1, 1955, Ms. Parks refused to obey a bus drivers' order that she give up her bus seat in the black section to a white man because the white section was full. It is the courage, dignity, and determination that Ms. Parks exemplified on this day that allows most historians to credit her with beginning the modern day civil rights movement. Ms. Parks' actions on December 1, 1955 led to the desegregation of American society and enabled all of this nation's citizens to realize freedom and equality.

The arrest of Ms. Parks led African Americans and sympathizers of other races to boycott the Montgomery city bus line until the buses in Montgomery were desegregated. The 381 day Montgomery Bus Boycott encouraged other courageous people across the United States to organize in protest and demand equal rights for all. The fearless acts of civil disobedience displayed by Rosa Parks and others resulted in the United States Supreme Court, on November 13, 1956, affirming a district court decision that held that Montgomery segregation codes deny and deprive African Americans of the equal protection of the laws. This decision would lead to other landmark Supreme Court decisions in which the Court would rule in the interest of justice and equality.

In the years following the Montgomery Bus Boycott, Ms. Parks moved to Detroit, Michigan in 1957 and continued her civil rights work by working in my District Office. Ms. Parks was with the office from 1965 until 1988. In the more than twenty years that Ms. Parks was in the office, she worked with a tireless spirit for the people of Detroit and other Americans. In 1987, she started the Rosa and Raymond Parks Institute for Self Development in Detroit, a nonprofit organization which motivates youth to reach their highest potential. So it is with great pleasure and honor that I stand today to recognize not only a civil rights pioneer, but a member of my staff, a constituent, and a friend.

It is in this recognition of the 50th Anniversary of Ms. Park's refusal to give up her seat on the bus, that I ask the Congress and the great people of this nation to work with the same courage, dignity, and determination exemplified by her to address modern day inequalities and injustice. The American dream is out of reach for millions. The United States is one of the richest nations in the world so I ask: Why aren't our schools thriving? Why are so many African Americans unemployed? Why are health care, housing, and college education so difficult to afford?

Civil rights pioneer Rosa Parks displayed a defiant act of courage 50 years ago so that these questions would not be raised today. I know that this Congress and the people of this nation can work to further the ideals of Ms. Parks and the Civil Rights Movement."

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